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Athletes' Perceptions

May 30, 2014

A collaborative study including Dr. Raymona Lawrence, associate professor of community health behavior and education, and Dr. Gulzar Shah, associate dean of research at the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health Georgia Southern University examined *Athletes' perceptions of national collegiate athletic association-mandated sickle cell trait screening: insight for academic institutions and college health professionals*. The study objective was to explore athletes' perspectives of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)-mandated sickle cell trait (SCT)-screening policy by examining race- and gender-related differences in athletes' perceptions regarding risk of having SCT and concern about loss of playing time. Participants: Participants were 259 athletes at a southeastern United States campus during April-August of 2010. Methods: Athletes completed a 21-question survey. Results: The majority of athletes (81.7%) perceived that they would have a high level of concern if found to carry the SCT. African Americans were 9.07 times more likely than Caucasians to perceive risk of having the SCT. The majority of athletes disagreed (38.4%) or did not know (50.8%) if they would lose playing time related to carrying the SCT. Conclusion: Campus health professionals must be aware of athletes' perspectives on NCAA's SCT screening so that athletes are not unnecessarily subjected to stress or harm.

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